HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH

NELSON DOUBLEDAY, INC.
PERSONAL SUCCESS PROGRAM

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH

by NORMAN LEWIS

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Personal Success Program

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by Norman Lewis

THERE is one thing you can be sure of—

The man who expects to make a success of his life cannot afford to let poor English stand in his way.

This does not mean that skill in using language will, all by itself, make you successful. Many other factors enter into the picture, and a broad combination of qualities and abilities is needed to push a person up to the top.

But we do know that the lack of that skill can hold you back, can slow down your progress, more than almost any other. That lack makes it far harder than it should be to command the respect and attention of the people to whom you communicate your ideas.

Almost *every one* of us, no matter how well educated, suffers to some extent from this lack. Even those whose English is correct hesitate now and then over the proper way to say or write something. But in the business and professional world any mistakes in English are a serious drawback to advancement. Stop for a moment to take stock of yourself.

Is there a chance that you are missing promotions, or are not moving ahead as fast as you should, *simply because your English gives a poor indication of your actual worth?*

Do you, perhaps, hesitate to express your thoughts to a group or to your superiors because you are not completely sure that your English is as good as it should be?

Does your command of language do full justice to the kind of person you are—or does it ever fail to help you make the sort of impression you would like to make?

Do you ever hesitate to speak up?

LET'S PUT IT TO A TEST

How good is your own day-to-day English? How confident are you that you can invariably say the right thing?

Below you will find twenty-five sentences of the kind anyone might use in a busy day's conversation or writing. In each sentence you are offered a choice between the correct and the incorrect, ungrammatical form. Thinking only of how you, yourself, would most probably phrase it, check either *a* or *b*.

1. Between you and (*a*) I, (*b*) me, I don't believe a word she says.
2. Everyone enjoyed the picture except (*a*) he, (*b*) him.
3. You just can't seem to get along with (*a*) he and I, (*b*) him and me.
4. He (*a*) lay, (*b*) laid down for a short nap after dinner.
5. Please (*a*) lie, (*b*) lay the baby on the bed.
6. He found junk (*a*) lying, (*b*) laying all over the place.
7. Is it (*a*) he, (*b*) him you're referring to?
8. The prisoner was (*a*) hung, (*b*) hanged two days after sentencing.
9. His wife's (*a*) childlike, (*b*) childish charm delights everyone.
10. That was my (*a*) principal, (*b*) principle reason for refusing her.
11. What do you (*a*) prophesize, (*b*) prophesy will happen?
12. How does all this (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect you?

13. What (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect are you trying to achieve?
14. You're certainly not as old as (*a*) I, (*b*) me.
15. I doubt that either of us (*a*) is, (*b*) are going to win.
16. Neither the secretary nor the treasurer (*a*) was, (*b*) were present at the board meeting.
17. Each of your answers (*a*) is, (*b*) are incorrect.
18. The cost of new houses (*a*) is, (*b*) are steadily dropping.
19. The queen, together with her attendants, (*a*) has, (*b*) have just ascended the steps.
20. I'm going to invite (*a*) he, (*b*) him and his wife to supper.
21. You and (*a*) we, (*b*) us are no longer friends.
22. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom are you looking for?
23. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom do you think just came in?
24. It's not what but (*a*) who, (*b*) whom you know.
25. Will doctors ever (*a*) effect, (*b*) affect a cure for cancer?

Key

1 (*b*), 2 (*b*), 3 (*b*), 4 (*a*), 5 (*b*), 6 (*a*), 7 (*a*), 8 (*b*), 9 (*a*), 10 (*a*), 11 (*b*), 12 (*a*), 13 (*b*), 14 (*a*), 15 (*a*), 16 (*a*), 17 (*a*), 18 (*a*), 19 (*a*), 20 (*b*), 21 (*a*), 22 (*b*), 23 (*a*), 24 (*b*), 25 (*a*).

Scoring

22–25	Correct	Excellent
19–21	Correct	Good
14–18	Correct	Average
0–13	Correct	Poor

IMPROVING YOUR ENGLISH IS EASY

Now you know where you stand. *Anything* less than a perfect score indicates that your English may be a stumbling block, a totally unnecessary hurdle in the way of your business or professional advancement.

Even more important, if you were not *really sure* of the choices you checked (though they turned out to be correct), then you are not as self-confident about your use of words as you should be—and as you *can be* by the time you finish this booklet.

If there is *any* chance that poor English stands in the way of your getting what you want out of life, then this is a condition that you can correct in an amazingly short time.

The three most common types of errors

How can I make such a sweeping promise? Simply because my experience over the last ten years teaching correct English to adult classes at two colleges has proved that:

1. The average educated adult makes only *a few types* of language errors; but, either out of confusion or ignorance, he makes these same errors *over and over again.*

2. With the proper kind of application and practice, any normally intelligent person can learn enough about English grammar to banish these errors permanently from his speech and writing—*and he can accomplish this in a month or less!*

What are the errors that repeatedly occur in the language of the adult who has a poor grounding in grammar? They fall into *only three* broad categories:

1. Pronouns (*I* or *me*? *he* or *him*? *who* or *whom*? etc.)
2. Singular and plural verbs (*is* or *are*? *has* or *have*? etc.)
3. Confusing words (*lay* or *lie*? *affect* or *effect*? *principle* or *principal*? etc.)

These three areas of usage can be completely and successfully mastered without getting bogged down in the dull and wearisome rules of grammar—with very little use of technical terms—and in short sessions, of no more than fifteen or twenty minutes each, that deal with *practical, everyday problems,* and that treat English as the *living language* that it is.

I offer you just such a plan of mastery.

You will notice, if you glance through the remaining pages of this booklet, that ten exciting projects are laid out

for you, and that each project begins with a number of questions that go directly to the heart of most people's confusion.

Consider these questions carefully, checking off your reactions to each one of them. Then read the answers and explanations that follow. Next, turn to the Practice Cards and spend a few minutes in interesting application so that correct patterns can become habitual, almost second nature with you. And then, finally, test the success of your learning.

THE PRACTICE CARDS

You will find, bound in the center of the booklet, twenty-four perforated practice cards, one or more for each project, and four final cards that will really hammer home all you have been studying.

These cards are removable, and when placed in their convenient holder will fit easily into your pocket, wallet, or purse. Carry around with you every day all the cards you have already worked on, and thus you can use odd and otherwise idle moments to tighten up your learning, to practice, to make good habits more and more an integral part of your speaking and writing.

Each practice card asks you to participate actively by answering questions, by choosing correct words, by filling in blanks, or by reading aloud—in brief, to *learn by doing*.

This entire kit, as you will shortly discover, is completely self-teaching and self-testing—nothing else is required beyond the booklet and the twenty-four cards.

But it is much more than that. It is an adventure in learning. It is a means of sharply increasing your skill with words. It is also, if you follow instructions, a stimulating experience that will leave you with renewed confidence that you can present your ideas properly and effectively.

For you will not only *be* correct when you speak and write, but—and this is what will build your self-assurance—you will *know* that you are right.

Ready to begin?

Project One

HOW TO HANDLE OBJECT PRONOUNS

Which is correct:

1. Between you and *I*, OR between you and *me*?
2. Everyone came on time except *her*, OR except *she*?
3. We sent a special invitation to *he* and his wife, OR to *him* and his wife?

Check off your immediate reactions before proceeding.

Answer:

Between, except, and *to* belong to a special group of words called *prepositions,* and prepositions, without fail, govern *objective pronouns.*

This is one of the simplest and most easily managed of all grammatical principles.

But wait. How can you recognize a *preposition* when you meet one? And how are *objective* pronouns different from any other kind?

"Everyone came on time
except she . . . er . . . her."

Here are the fifteen prepositions that are commonly followed by pronouns. Study them carefully. Become really accustomed to them, so that whenever they occur in your speech or writing you will be keenly aware that you are dealing with prepositions.

between	**to**	**before**
among	**for**	**after**
like	**about**	**near**
with	**of**	**except**
without	**by**	**but**

And now consider five critically important *objective pronouns.*

me him her us them

Within thirty seconds or less, you can commit these five words to memory. Indeed, within another thirty seconds you can learn them so well that the moment someone says

to you *objective pronouns,* you will respond reflexively and without hesitation: *me, him, her, us, them.*

Why do we call them *objective* pronouns? Because, simply, they are used as *objects* of prepositions.

No other forms of these pronouns follow prepositions, and to say "between you and *I,*" "except *she,*" "for *he,*" or any other phrase that fails to combine a preposition with an *objective* pronoun is to commit an error that takes you down a notch in the opinion of the people you work with. (*You* and *it,* incidentally, are also pronouns, but since these have no variant forms, they never offer any temptation to error.)

What does all this mean to you as a person aiming to improve his English? Just this: That you must bend every effort toward forming the habit of using *only objective* pronouns whenever you deal with prepositions. For example, each of the following seven phrases is totally *incorrect.* Take a pencil and cross out the improper pronoun; then rewrite, using the correct objective pronoun.

Incorrect usage (Cross out the wrong pronoun.)	**Correct usage** (Rewrite, substituting the correct pronoun.)
1. Between you and *I*	_____
2. Between *he and she*	_____
3. Very much like *we*	_____
4. For John and *I*	_____
5. No one except *they*	_____
6. All but *I*	_____
7. To *he* and his sister	_____

Key

1- me, 2- him and her, 3- us, 4- me, 5- them, 6- me, 7- him.

Now that isn't a bit hard so far, is it? But *understanding* a rule is one thing. *Applying* it without hesitation in everyday usage is quite another. Complete learning is much more than theoretical knowledge—it is also, and more importantly, the ability to use that knowledge for making *correct and instantaneous* responses under all conditions.

So, in order to drive your learning to deeper levels, read *aloud,* several times, the following correct phrases until you feel completely at ease with them.

1. **Between** *you and me*
2. **Between** *them and us*
3. **Between** *you and her*
4. More **like** *him* every day
5. **With** *him and me*
6. **Without** *you and her*
7. **Without** *us* men
8. **To** Mary and *him*
9. No one **but** *them*
10. Everyone **except** *me*

Now go back and read them aloud again.

And now, to close this first project, turn to the Practice Cards. By working with Cards 1 and 2, by pulling them out of your pocket or purse and drilling with them for the next day or so whenever you have a few moments of leisure, you will gradually *root out* any remaining tendency to error when you use prepositions and pronouns.

HOW TO MANAGE LAY AND LIE

Which is correct:

1. *Lay* down, Fido, OR *lie* down, Fido?
2. *Lay* OR *lie* the baby in its crib?
3. He *lay* OR *laid* down for a nap?

Check off your immediate reactions before proceeding.

Answer:

This complicated and somewhat confusing usage can be mastered within a few minutes, if you keep one simple fact in mind:

The distinction between "lay" and "lie" is purely and exclusively one of meaning.

Lay means to *place* or *put* an **object** or a **person** somewhere or in some position.

You *lay* (place) your **overcoat** on the chair.

You *lay* (place) the **patient** on his back.

Similarly, the hen *lays* an **egg**; let's not *lay* **it** on so thick; first we must *lay* down some **rules**; please *lay* the **child** in its carriage.

So much for the meaning and use of *lay*.

Now as to *lie:*

Lie means *to recline or remain,* or *to be in or take a flat or horizontal position.*

For example:

You *lie* asleep; your overcoat *lies* on the chair; the river *lies* along the border of the country; a person *lies* on his back; a penny *lies* in the mud; the child is *lying* in the crib.

"Lay down, Fido!
Lie down!"

Could any distinction be simpler? If you *put* or *place* **something** (or **someone**), you *lay* **it** (or **him**). If something or someone *reclines, remains,* etc., it or he *lies* or *is lying.*

Then why have I called these words complicated and confusing?

Because *lay* and *lie,* being verbs, have other tenses besides the present. And it is in these other tenses that the complication and confusion occur.

The Past of LAY and LIE

The past tense denotes finished action—today I *speak* (present), yesterday I *spoke* (past); today I *pay* (present), yesterday I *paid* (past).

So far as *lay* (*to place*) is concerned, there is no great problem. Today I *lay* (**something**), yesterday I *laid* (**something**).

All right—so far so good.

But the past tense of *lie* (*to recline,* etc.) is, of all things, *lay!* That is no misprint: the past of *lie* is, indeed and alas, *lay.*

So—

Today I *lie* asleep; but yesterday I *lay* asleep, the child *lay* asleep all morning, the penny *lay* in the mud all day.

The Perfect of LAY and LIE

The perfect tense combines with *has, have,* or *had;* for example, *has spoken, have gone, had worked, would have paid,* etc.

The perfect tense of *lay* is again easy—*has laid, have laid, had laid.*

But *lie* is irregular—the perfect tense is *has lain, have lain, had lain.*

Today I *lie* down (present tense); yesterday I *lay* down (past tense); he has *lain* asleep all day (perfect tense).

GET DOWN TO WORK

Perhaps you are now thinking (I rather hope you are!) that this is not half so complicated or confusing as I have threatened.

In a sense, that is so. The distinction, even in the various tenses, is not hard to *understand.* The difficulty comes in the *application.* To know how *lay* differs from *lie,* to be able to recall the *past* and *perfect* forms of each verb—this

is not hard. But to *use* each verb correctly, and without worry or hesitation—that is another matter.

Your primary aim in this kit, bear in mind, is not merely to *understand* English grammar—but rather to be sure that you always, as a matter of unthinking habit and second nature, *use* correct grammar whenever you speak or write.

So now we turn again to the active, and therefore most rewarding, part of our project. Remove Cards 3, 4, and 5, and work with them faithfully. Do what is required, answer all questions, test the success of your learning, and keep practicing whenever you get the chance.

"Is it him you want to see?"

HOW TO FEEL AT HOME WITH NOMINATIVE PRONOUNS

Which is correct:

1. Is it *they* OR *them* you want to see?
2. Is it *she* OR *her* you're talking about?
3. If you answer the telephone, and someone asks for you by name, do you say, "This is *he*" OR "This is *him*"?

Check off your immediate reactions before proceeding.

Answer:

You will recall that in Project One we discussed *objective pronouns,* and that these were *me, him, her, us,* and *them.*

To solve our present problems, you will want to become familiar with *nominative pronouns.* These are:

I he she we they

Objective pronouns, we discovered, are used *after prepositions.*

Nominative pronouns, on the other hand, are used after some form of the verb *to be.*

In the following examples, the heavy print words are forms of *to be;* the italicized words are *nominative* pronouns.

It **is** *I.*

Was it *he?*

This **was** *she.*

It could **have been** *we.*

Would you like **to be** *they?*

If you wish to use strictly correct English, you will be careful to see that *any* form of the verb *to be* is followed *only* by a nominative pronoun.

Here are all the possible forms of *to be*. Become so familiar with them that you will automatically use a *nominative* pronoun after each one, especially in any kind of formal speech or writing.

To Be

am is are was were

shall be will be should be could be etc.

has been have been had been etc.

But bear this in mind:

In everyday conversation, we do not necessarily observe too rigidly all the strict rules of English grammar.

And so, to be informal, not to sound excessively precise, it is allowable to bend (without really breaking) the rule about using the nominative pronoun *I* after the verb *to be* in common phrases like:

It's *me*.

Was it *me*?

It wasn't *me*.

It could have been *me*, etc.

This phrasing is considered acceptable English on the colloquial (that is, conversational) level; it may be used, without guilt, in informal speech.

With the other pronouns, however, it is wiser to be careful — the nominative forms are preferable after the verb *to be*.

GET DOWN TO WORK

And now that you understand the rule about *nominative* pronouns following the verb *to be*, it is up to you to push this knowledge to so deep a level that you *automatically* think, talk, and write with the correct forms. Remove Practice Card 6, work on the first side to make sure you know the difference between a nominative and an objective pronoun, then turn to the second side and test yourself. Next, review Practice Cards 1 and 2, and then, when you feel that your learning is in high gear, take the following short review test on pronouns.

1. No one but (*a*) I, (*b*) me can help you.
2. I repeat, it is only (*a*) I, (*b*) me who can help you.
3. No one does it like (*a*) he, (*b*) him.
4. It's only (*a*) he, (*b*) him who can do it like that.
5. This is a secret between (*a*) I, (*b*) me and (*c*) she, (*d*) her.
6. It's only (*a*) she, (*b*) her I would entrust with such a secret.

Key

1 (*b*), 2 (*a*), 3 (*b*), 4 (*a*), 5 (*b*), (*d*), 6 (*a*).

HOW TO UNCONFUSE CONFUSING WORDS

Which is correct:

1. The spy was *hanged* OR *hung* at dawn?
2. Her *childish* OR *childlike* charm captivated her audience?
3. He is a man of strict *principles* OR *principals*?
4. He made a dark *prophecy* OR *prophesy* about next year's events?

Check off your immediate reactions before proceeding.

Answer:

Notice how simple it is to learn the basic distinctions that will help you solve these four problems.

Hanged—Hung

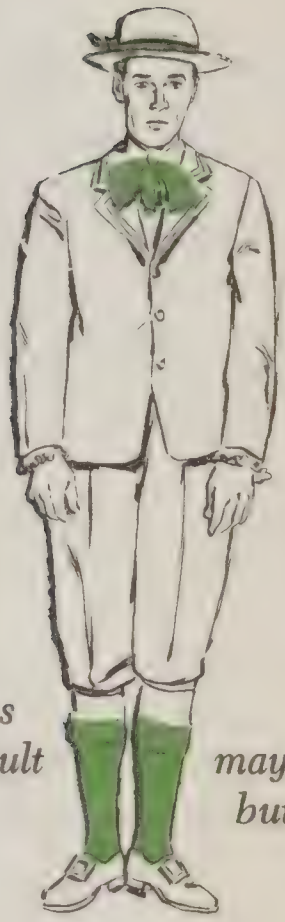
Both forms come from the verb *to hang*, but in careful usage there is an important distinction.

Hanged indicates death by some means — *execution, lynching,* or *suicide.* For example, the spy was *hanged* at dawn; the mob *hanged* the horse thief; he *hanged* himself.

Hung, on the other hand, merely indicates *suspension.* For example, they *hung* the picture, the drapes, the flag, etc.; the picture, drapes, flag, etc. was (or were) *hung;* he *hung* out of the window looking for his mother.

Childish—Childlike

Both words refer, of course, to characteristic qualities of children, but our choice between the two indicates whether



Attractive qualities in an adult may be childlike, but not childish

A NOTE ABOUT YOUR CARDS

The section of cards bound into this booklet is an important part of the Personal Success Program. They help you further develop the skill explained in the booklet through actual practice and application. Be sure to use them faithfully.

Note that the cards are perforated so they can be torn apart easily. Do not try to rip the entire section out at once, or you will damage the booklet. Crease the cards along the perforations to help them tear out cleanly and neatly. They can then be kept in the little pocket holder included with each booklet.

Note, too, that sometimes you will find double cards. They should not be torn apart, but folded as indicated so they will fit into the pocket holder along with the single cards.

PRACTICE CARD 1 **PROJECT ONE**

Choose the 15 prepositions out of the 25 words below. Write the numbers in the space marked *1* below. Check with the key on the other side. Tomorrow, cover up your first list and try again in the space marked 2. The day after, try again in the space marked 3.

1. *go* 2. *but* 3. *of* 4. *by* 5. *the* 6. *among* 7. *and* 8. *like* 9. *with* 10. *an* 11. *for* 12. *or* 13. *to* 14. *not* 15. *than* 16. *between* 17. *without* 18. *far* 19. *before* 20. *if* 21. *about* 22. *than* 23. *after* 24. *near* 25. *except*.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 2 **PROJECT ONE**

Prepositions Take Objective Pronouns

Choose the correct pronoun in the following sentences. Say it aloud, or at least whisper it. Do it every day until you never hesitate for even an instant.

1. We'll keep this strictly BETWEEN you and (I, me).
2. There's something going BETWEEN (he and she, him and her).
3. What would women do WITHOUT (we, us) men?
4. Let's not send an invitation TO (she, her) and her husband.
5. This is just FOR you and (I, me).
6. The child looks more LIKE (he, him) and his wife every day.

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 3 **PROJECT TWO**

Lay — Lie

Say aloud — fill in if you wish — the word that correctly completes each sentence:

1. To place or put something somewhere is to _____ it.
2. To rest, recline, or remain is to _____.
3. The past of *lay* is _____; the perfect is _____.
4. The past of *lie* is _____; the perfect is _____.

KEY

1- lay, 2- lie, 3- laid; laid, 4- lay; lain.

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 4 **PROJECT TWO**

To Lay (place)

Read aloud many times with the correct form of *lay* (check the key) to form strong and reliable habits.

1. _____ the linen away in the closet.
2. _____ the book on the table.
3. _____ the baby in its crib.
4. He _____ *(past)* the wounded man down.
5. The hen _____ *(past)* an egg.
6. I have never _____ eyes on him before.
7. Did you _____ any money away?
8. They did not _____ the rug properly.

KEY

1- Lay, 2- Lay, 3- Lay, 4- laid, 5- laid, 6- laid, 7- lay, 8- lay.

(over)

7. Would you like to come WITH Judy and (I, me)?
8. Please give my regards TO (her, she) and her husband.
9. The play was obviously ABOUT her mother and (she, her).
10. This is meant, I believe, FOR you and (we, us).
11. The novel was written BY (her, she) and her brother.
12. Everyone fell for his line EXCEPT (me, I).
13. No one could act that way BUT (they, them).

KEY

1- me, 2- him and her, 3- us, 4- her, 5- me, 6- him, 7- me, 8- her, 9- her, 10- us, 11- her, 12- me, 13- them.

Write very lightly below the five special *objective pronouns* you have memorized. Practice reciting them to yourself without looking at the card.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

KEY

2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 24, 25.

To Lie (recline, etc.)

1. _____ down.
2. She now _____ asleep.
3. The penny is _____ in the mud.
4. Yesterday I _____ down.
5. The child _____ asleep all morning.
6. The penny _____ *(past)* in the mud.
7. She has _____ down.
8. The book has _____ on the desk all day.
9. We had _____ quietly for many hours.
10. Did he _____ down for a nap?
11. The rug did not _____ straight.

KEY

1- Lie, 2- lies, 3- lying, 4- lay, 5- lay, 6- lay, 7- lain, 8- lain, 9- lain, 10- lie, 11- lie.

Fill in, and memorize, the correct forms of each verb.

LAY

PRESENT	PAST	PERFECT
.....	.....	have has or had .....

LIE

PRESENT	PAST	PERFECT
.....	.....	have has or had .....

KEY

lay, laid, laid; lie, lay, lain

PRACTICE CARD 5 **PROJECT TWO**

Lay–Lie

Make a careful choice in each of the following, check with the key on the reverse side, then read all sentences aloud several times.

1. (*a*) Lay, (*b*) Lie down like a good dog.
2. (*a*) Lay, (*b*) Lie your hand on on mine.
3. (*a*) Lay, (*b*) Lie the baby on the big bed.
4. He was (*a*) laying, (*b*) lying asleep when the bell rang.
5. Our ultimate hope, of course (*a*) lays, (*b*) lies in a complete reorganization.
6. He (*a*) lay, (*b*) laid awake all night thinking.
7. The book (*a*) lay, (*b*) laid on his desk.

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 6 **PROJECT THREE**

Nominative Pronouns

Are you now an expert at separating nominative and objective pronouns? Pick all nominative forms, *then* all objective forms, and practice again at a later time.

ME, I

HE, HIM

HER, SHE

WE, US

THEM, THEY

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 7 **PROJECT FOUR**

Confusing Words

Complete the following sentences:

1. If execution or suicide is involved, someone is _____.
2. Pictures, curtains, etc. are _____.
3. Pleasant qualities of childhood are _____.
4. The qualities of childhood which we disapprove of in an adult are _____.
5. A rule, law, or truth is a _____ _____.
6. The word meaning *main* is _____.

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 8 **PROJECT FOUR**

Confusing Words

Choose the correct word. Go over the sentences several times to make your reactions automatic.

1. Have they (*a*) hung, (*b*) hanged the murderer yet?
2. In a fit of despondency, he (*a*) hung, (*b*) hanged himself.
3. She (*a*) hung, (*b*) hanged the wash out, and then took herself off to the movies.
4. You're being very (*a*) childish, (*b*) childlike. I'm annoyed with you.
5. She has a wonderful, almost (*a*) childish, (*b*) childlike innocence.

(over)

Choose the correct pronoun, then read all the sentences aloud several times so that you become quite accustomed to the strictly correct pattern.

1. It's (*a*) he, (*b*) him I'm referring to.
2. It won't be (*a*) him, (*b*) he who will suffer.
3. It wasn't (*a*) they, (*b*) them who did it.
4. Is it (*a*) we, (*b*) us you're talking about?
5. This is (*a*) her, (*b*) she.
6. It was (*a*) I, (*b*) me who did it.

KEY

1- a, 2- b, 3- a, 4- a, 5- b, 6- a.

8. We (*a*) lay, (*b*) laid in a complete supply of groceries.
9. She (*a*) lay, (*b*) laid her hand on his head.
10. Have they (*a*) laid, (*b*) lain the rugs yet?
11. The baby has (*a*) laid, (*b*) lain asleep all morning.
12. Did you (*a*) lay, (*b*) lie away any money for next week?
13. (*a*) Lying, (*b*) Laying on her side, she fell asleep.
14. Did you (*a*) lie, (*b*) lay down after dinner?

KEY

1- b, 2- a, 3- a, 4- b, 5- b, 6- a, 7- a, 8- b, 9- b, 10- a, 11- b, 12- a, 13- a, 14- a.

6. He is studying the (*a*) principles, (*b*) principals of electronics.
7. If I do that, I will be violating my (*a*) principles, (*b*) principals.
8. Is that the (*a*) principle, (*b*) principal reason for your refusal?
9. He's hoping to get 6% on his (*a*) principle, (*b*) principal.
10. Who are the (*a*) principles, (*b*) principals in the new play?
11. Can you (*a*) prophesy, (*b*) prophecy economic conditions over the next year?

(see card 9)

7. The head of a school is a _____.
   Money on which interest is paid is one's _____.
   A *main* person is a _____.
8. To predict is to _____.
9. A prediction is a _____.

KEY

1- hanged, 2- hung, 3- childlike, 4- childish, 5- principle, 6- principal, 7- all principal, 8- prophesy, 9- prophecy.

PRACTICE CARD 9 **PROJECT FOUR**

Confusing Words

(continued from card 8)

12. He (*a*) prophesied, (*b*) prophesized, (*c*) prophecied a quick upturn in buying orders.
13. This is the weirdest (*a*) prophesy, (*b*) prophecy I have ever heard.
14. New York is the (*a*) principal, (*b*) principle seaport on the east coast.
15. The judge sentenced the convict to be (*a*) hung, (*b*) hanged.

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 10 **PROJECT FIVE**

Affect–Effect

Choose between *affect* and *effect* in the sentences below. Do this as often as you need to in order to make your response automatic.

1. If a *noun* is required, use _____.
2. If a *verb* is required, normally use _____.
3. However, if the verb means *bring about,* use _____.

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 11 **PROJECT FIVE**

Affect–Effect

Choose the correct word in each sentence. Do it every day until you never hesitate.

1. How did his insults (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect you?
2. This is the most beautiful (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect I have ever seen.
3. His aim was to (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect a better understanding between them.
4. He (*a*) affects, (*b*) effects an air of sophistication he certainly doesn't possess.
5. Her story (*a*) affected, (*b*) effected us deeply.

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 12 **PROJECT SIX**

Than and As

Say the missing verbs to yourself:

1. I'm not as happy as *he* (_____).
2. We're stronger than *they* (_____).
3. Do you love him more than (_____) *me*?
4. You work harder than *I* (_____).
5. Are you as rich as *I* (_____)?

KEY

1- is, 2- are, 3- you love, 4- do, 5- am.

(over)

Place N over the italicized *nouns*, V over the italicized *verbs*.

1- 2- 3- 4- 5-
a *list* of *books; list* the *items; book*
6- 7- 8- 9-
a *passage; pass* the *salt;* he *made*
10- 11- 12-
a forward *pass;* he *salted* the *meat;*
13- 14-
an athletic *contest;* he *will contest*
15- 16- 17-
the *divorce;* he *divorced* his *wife;* a
18- 19-
good *effect;* it *affects* me; it will
20-
effect a cure.

KEY

1- N, 2- N, 3- V, 4- N, 5- V, 6- N, 7- V, 8- N, 9- V, 10- N, 11- V, 12- N, 13- N, 14- V, 15- N, 16- V, 17- N, 18- N, 19- V, 20- V.

Choose the correct pronoun.

1. Don't you wish you were as happy as (*a*) I, (*b*) me?
2. Even if we're not as strong as (*a*) them, (*b*) they, we can still win.
3. No one can run as fast as (*a*) him, (*b*) he.
4. I can hear you better than (*a*) she, (*b*) her, i.e., I can't hear her very well.
5. I can hear you better than (*a*) she, (*b*) her, i.e., she doesn't hear you as well as I do.

KEY

1- a, 2- b, 3- b, 4- b, 5- a.

16. The weather bureau (*a*) prophesizes, (*b*) prophecies, (*c*) prophesies rain.

KEY

1- b, 2- b, 3- a, 4- a, 5- b, 6- a, 7- a, 8- b, 9- b, 10- b, 11- a, 12- a, 13- b, 14- a, 15- b, 16- c.

6. We must try to (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect a measure of economic security for all Americans.
7. Do you really ever expect to put this plan into (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect?
8. He has a dynamic (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect on young and impressionable women.
9. What (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect are you striving for?
10. This new law will (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect everyone in the city.

KEY

1- a, 2- b, 3- b, 4- a, 5- a, 6- b, 7- b, 8- b, 9- b, 10- a.

PRACTICE CARD 13 PROJECT SEVEN

Either—Neither

Choose the correct verb, then practice aloud.

1. Neither of these problems (*a*) is, (*b*) are correct.
2. (*a*) Has, (*b*) Have either of your sisters married yet?
3. (*a*) Were, (*b*) Was either of my suggestions useful to you?
4. Neither of his children (*a*) have, (*b*) has been able to attend college.
5. (*a*) Has, (*b*) Have either Mr. Brown or his wife returned home?
6. Either the manager or his assistant (*a*) are, (*b*) is in the store every day.

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 14 PROJECT EIGHT

Agreement of Subject and Verb

Pick out the subject of each of the italicized verbs.

1. One of my friends *is*
2. Each of your brothers *has*
3. The number of voters *increases*
4. That lot of books *was*
5. A box of marbles *sells*
6. The price of cars *is*

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 15 PROJECT EIGHT

Agreement of Subject and Verb

Read aloud, using the correct verb:

1. George and Henry (*a*) is, (*b*) are coming for dinner.
2. There (*a*) was, (*b*) were a man and woman waiting here a few minutes ago—what happened to them?
3. One of my intimate friends (*a*) has, (*b*) have just joined your organization.
4. Each of these people (*a*) has, (*b*) have to be taken care of.
5. The number of voters (*a*) is, (*b*) are greater this year than last.

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 16 PROJECT EIGHT

Agreement of Subject and Verb

(continued from card 15)

12. Neither of my prophecies (*a*) has, (*b*) have turned out to be correct.
13. (*a*) Have, (*b*) Has your mother or father ever attended college?
14. The manager or his assistant (*a*) are, (*b*) is always in the store.

KEY

1- b, 2-b, 3- a, 4- a, 5- a, 6- b, 7- a, 8- a, 9- a, 10- a, 11- a, 12- a, 13- b, 14- b.

(over)

7. Her brother together with all his friends *runs*
8. The principal as well as the teachers *has*
9. The president along with the cabinet members *was*
10. Tom, like his brothers, *suffers*
11. Debra, unlike her cousins, *is*

KEY

1- one, 2- each, 3- number, 4- lot, 5- box, 6- price, 7- brother, 8- principal, 9- president, 10- Tom, 11- Debra.

7. Neither the blue hat nor the gray one (*a*) looks, (*b*) look good on you.
8. Neither the murderer nor his accomplices (*a*) has, (*b*) have ever been found.
9. Neither the parents nor their child (*a*) understands, (*b*) understand what's going on.
10. Neither he nor I (*a*) is, (*b*) am, (*c*) are ready; neither I nor he (*a*) is, (*b*) am, (*c*) are ready; neither she nor they (*a*) is, (*b*) are ready; neither they nor she (*a*) is, (*b*) are ready.

KEY

1- a, 2- a, 3- b, 4- b, 5- a, 6- b, 7- a, 8- b, 9- a, 10- b, a, b, a.

Do you remember the rules? Fill in the correct answers lightly.

1. Singular subjects, connected by *and*, the verb is _____
2. Singular subjects connected by *or*, the verb is _____
3. The subject comes _____ the preposition.
4. The verb never agrees with the word _____ the preposition.
5. Quantity subjects with a plural sense, though singular in form, take a _____ verb.

KEY

1- plural, 2- singular, 3- before, 4- after, 5- plural.

6. A number of my friends (*a*) has, (*b*) have promised to vote for me.
7. Another boatload of refugees (*a*) has, (*b*) have just arrived.
8. The price of foodstuffs (*a*) is, (*b*) are finally falling.
9. George, together with his wife (*a*) has, (*b*) have just arrived.
10. Mr. Brown as well as his wife (*a*) has, (*b*) have signed the contract.
11. Margie, like her parents, (*a*) has, (*b*) have a sweet and pleasant disposition.

(continued on card 16)

PRACTICE CARD 17 **PROJECT NINE**

Double Pronouns

Read aloud, using the correct pronoun. Review every day until you read without hesitating:

1. Are you and (they, them) friends?
2. He wants you and (we, us) to be friends.
3. He thinks John and (I, me) are friends.
4. He asked my sister and (I, me) to help him.
5. It's you and (he, him) I'm worried about.

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 18 **PROJECT TEN**

Who—Whom

Restate all or part of each of the following sentences, substituting either *he* or *him* for the relative pronoun in the parentheses. Then note whether *who* or *whom* should be used.

1. (Who, Whom) are you?
2. (Who, Whom) do you wish to see?
3. (Who, Whom) were you speaking to?
4. Is this the man (who, whom) you think broke the bank at Monte Carlo?

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 19 **PROJECT TEN**

Who—Whom

Key to WHO—WHOM Card 18.

1. You are *he* (a nominative pronoun follows any form of the verb *to be*); hence, *who.*
2. You wish to see *him;* hence, *whom.*
3. You were speaking to *him;* hence, whom.
4. You think *he* broke the bank; hence, *who.*

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 20 **PROJECT TEN**

Who—Whom

Are you nearly an expert on this baffling problem? Test your success by reading aloud, using the correct form:

1. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom does he think he is, anyway?
2. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom are you waiting for?
3. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom is he pretending to be?
4. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom would you like to marry?
5. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom do you expect to come calling tonight?

(over)

5. (Who, Whom) do you think broke the bank at Monte Carlo?

6. (Who, Whom) do you expect me to appoint as chairman?

7. (Who, Whom) do you know?

8. (Who, Whom) are you working with?

(For key, see Card 19)

6. This invitation is not addressed to my wife and (I, me).

7. That's no way to talk to (we, us) boys.

8. You expect too much of (they, them) and (we, us).

9. I hope you and (she, her) can come tomorrow.

10. I want you and (she, her) to help me.

KEY

1- they, 2- us, 3- I, 4- me, 5- he, 6- me, 7- us, 8- them and us, 9- she, 10- her.

6. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom do you think will call tonight?

7. Is this the man (*a*) who, (*b*) whom we're waiting for?

8. Is this the man (*a*) who, (*b*) whom you claim hit you?

9. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom did you meet last night?

10. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom did you go out with last night?

KEY

1- a, 2- b, 3- a, 4- b, 5- b, 6- a, 7- b, 8- a, 9- b, 10- b.

5. You think *he* broke the bank; hence, *who.*

6. You expect me to appoint *him;* hence, *whom.*

7. You know *him;* hence, *whom.*

8. You are working with *him;* hence, *whom.*

PRACTICE CARD 21 **REVIEW**

Objective and Nominative Pronouns

If you have reviewed Practice Cards 1, 2, 6, 12, and 17 until your answers are automatic, check yourself on these choices:

1. There's something going on between (*a*) him and her, (*b*) he and she that I can't figure out.
2. Everyone except (*a*) she, (*b*) her was on time.
3. This was sent for (*a*) you and I, (*b*) you and me.
4. Let's keep this strictly between you and (*a*) I, (*b*) me, shall we?
5. No one was able to answer all the questions but you and (*a*) we, (*b*) us.

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 22 **REVIEW**

Lay and Lie, Who and Whom

After you have done Practice Cards 3, 4, 5, 18, 19, and 20, several times, try this new challenge:

1. We found all kinds of junk (*a*) laying, (*b*) lying around.
2. He (*a*) laid, (*b*) lay so quietly we thought he was dead.
3. How long has he (*a*) lain, (*b*) laid asleep?
4. Please (*a*) lie, (*b*) lay your hand on my arm.
5. We (*a*) laid, (*b*) lay, (*c*) lied the baby in the crib.
6. Did you (*a*) lie, (*b*) lay asleep all morning?

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 23 **REVIEW**

Confusing Words

Practice Cards 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 should have prepared you to make these choices without pausing to think:

1. Witches were (*a*) hung, (*b*) hanged in Salem years ago.
2. I can't stand her (*a*) childlike, (*b*) childish tantrums.
3. Idlewild is one of the (*a*) principal, (*b*) principle airports in the east.
4. Are you good at (*a*) prophesizing, (*b*) prophecying, (*c*) prophesying?
5. What (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect will this have on business?

(over)

PRACTICE CARD 24 **REVIEW**

Singular and Plural

Here is your final check-up on what you practiced with Cards 13, 14, 15, and 16. Can you make every choice surely and automatically?

1. Neither of us (*a*) is, (*b*) are sure to win.
2. Either Mr. Brown or his partner (*a*) goes, (*b*) go to market every day.
3. Mr. Brown and his partner (*a*) goes, (*b*) go to market every day.
4. Mr. Brown as well as his partner (*a*) goes, (*b*) go to market every day.
5. A bag of groceries (*a*) was, (*b*) were standing on the counter.
6. Each of my prophecies (*a*) has, (*b*) have come true.

(over)

7. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom is he waiting to see?

8. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom is he looking for?

9. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom are you inviting to your wedding?

10. Is this the man (*a*) who, (*b*) whom you claim damaged your car?

11. This is one man (*a*) who, (*b*) whom I think can handle the class.

12. (*a*) Who, (*b*) Whom would you like to be?

KEY

1- b, 2- b, 3- a, 4- b, 5- a, 6- a, 7- b, 8- b, 9- b, 10- a, 11- a, 12- a.

6. Was it (*a*) he, (*b*) him who did that?

7. Is it (*a*) we, (*b*) us you're referring to?

8. You're just the same as (*a*) I, (*b*) me.

9. I'm not older than (*a*) he, (*b*) him.

10. Did you call John and (*a*) I, (*b*) me?

11. I have to blame both you and (*a*) she, (*b*) her for that.

12. I want you and (*a*) she, (*b*) her to be happy together.

KEY

1- a, 2- b, 3- b, 4- b, 5- b, 6- a, 7- a, 8- a, 9- a, 10- b, 11- b, 12- b.

7. (*a*) Has, (*b*) Have either of your parents come home yet?

8. The majority of my friends (*a*) is, (*b*) are honest.

9. This lot of goods (*a*) has, (*b*) have already been sold.

10. The value of your bonds (*a*) are, (*b*) is increasing.

11. Neither you nor he (*a*) are, (*b*) is sure to win.

12. (*a*) Has, (*b*) Have the treasurer or secretary signed the report yet?

KEY

1- a, 2- a, 3- b, 4- a, 5- a, 6- a, 7- a, 8- b, 9- a, 10- b, 11- b, 12 - a.

6. How will this (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect business?

7. The new laws, it is hoped, will (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect an upturn in business.

8. Would you like to make a (*a*) prophecy, (*b*) prophesy about it?

9. He is a man of deep (*a*) principal, (*b*) principle.

10. Why does he (*a*) affect, (*b*) effect that peculiar accent?

KEY

1- b, 2- b, 3- a, 4- c, 5- b, 6- a, 7- b, 8- a, 9- b, 10- a.

we *approve* or *disapprove* of the qualities we are describing.

Thus, we speak of childish *temper, impatience, stubbornness*, etc. and by using *childish* we are saying that we do not approve of these qualities in an adult.

However, childlike *charm, innocence, frankness, wonder*, etc.,—these are another matter, these are qualities we admire in a grown-up.

Principle—Principal

A *principle* is a *rule* or truth. Note the ending *-le* in both princip*le* and ru*le*. *Principle* is always a *noun*.

Principal is usually an *adjective*, meaning *main, chief*, or *most important*. Note the *a* in both m*a*in and princip*a*l.

Principal is also a noun meaning:

1. The head of a school.
2. The main person, rather than an agent.
3. A sum of money.

For example:

He is a man of strict *principles* (rules). It's the *principle* (rule), not the money. What *principle* (truth) does this illustrate?

But:

The *principal* (main) reason; the *principal* (head) of the school; 3 per cent on your *principal* (money); the *principals* in the divorce action (main people).

Prophecy—Prophesy

Prophecy is a *noun* meaning *prediction* and pronounced PROFF-e-see. The plural is *prophecies*.

Prophesy is a *verb* meaning to *predict* and pronounced PROFF-e-sigh. The forms are *prophesies, prophesied, prophesying, prophesier,* etc.

For example:

A dire *prophecy* (prediction); many *prophecies* (predictions); a strange *prophecy* (prediction); etc.

But:

What do you *prophesy* (predict)? He *prophesied* (predicted) rain. He is expert at *prophesying* (predicting). She *prophesies* (predicts) all kinds of misfortune.

And note, particularly, that there is *no such word* as *prophesize.*

GET DOWN TO WORK

Glance through our project once again to make sure you have these distinctions clearly sorted out in your mind, then use Practice Cards 7, 8, and 9 to engage in the kind of active participation that will permanently nail down your learning.

HOW TO GET UNTWISTED ON AFFECT–EFFECT

Which is correct:

1. This is a strange *affect* OR *effect*?
2. This *affects* OR *effects* him strangely?
3. Doctors are trying to *affect* OR *effect* a cure for cancer?

Check off your immediate reactions before proceeding.

Answer:

Effect and *affect* are pronounced identically when spoken (the first letter of both words sounds like *a* in *sofa*), so this is a problem that can occur only in writing, which is fortunate. For, at least in the beginning, it takes a little time and a certain amount of analysis to figure out which spelling to use. And, above all, it takes a strong feeling for the difference between a *noun* and a *verb*.

To choose unerringly, you *must* know whether the word you want is functioning in its sentence as a *noun* or as a *verb*. And to know this, you must be able to realize whether the word in question expresses:

1) an idea, a thing, an abstract quality, etc. (in which case it is a *noun*); or,

2) an action, something happening, a *doing* or *occurring* (in which case it is a *verb*).

For instance:

1. The *effect* of his refusal. This is an idea.

2. His refusal *affected* me. This is something happening; his refusal *did something* to me.

The italicized word in sentence 1 is a *noun;* in sentence 2, a *verb.*

More instances:

A blunt *refusal*—an idea, hence *refusal* is a noun.

He *refused* bluntly—he did something, hence *refused* is a verb.

He has many *likes—noun.*

He *likes* me—*verb.*

Keen *enjoyment*—noun.

I *enjoy* this—*verb.*

Do you now begin to sense the difference between a *noun* and a *verb?*

If so, you will have no further trouble with *effect—affect* once you keep the following points in mind.

1. If a *noun* is required, always use *effect.*
2. If a *verb* is required, generally use *affect.*
3. However, if the required *verb* means, specifically, *to bring about,* use *effect.*

That's all there is to it. You will realize how clear the distinctions are once we present them in chart form.

The Noun: Effect

An *effect* is *a* result, *an* influence, *a* change—in short, an *idea.* As a *noun,* it is often preceded by *a, an, the, which, what, this, that,* or some other *adjective.*

For example:

What effect are you aiming for?

This is *a* beautiful effect.
This effect was unexpected.

The Verb: To Affect

The important thing about *affect* is that it is a *verb* and thus shows *action* or *movement*. It means to influence, to act on, to concern, to move (emotionally); it also means to pretend, to assume. *Affect* has various forms common to verbs.

For example:

His words *affected* me strangely.
How *does* the new law *affect* you?
Will his attitude *affect* your decision?
He always *affects* such an air of innocence when he is caught.
This *has* not *affected* my decision.

Another Verb: To Effect

To *effect*, as a verb, has one basic meaning—*to bring about*. Thus:

Will doctors ever *effect* (bring about) a cure for cancer?
Can we *effect* (bring about) a peaceful settlement of international differences?

To come to a decision:

Ask yourself, do I want a *noun* or a *verb*?
If a *noun*, spell it *effect*.
If a *verb*, spell it *affect*—UNLESS—
It means *bring about*, in which case spell it *effect*.

GET DOWN TO WORK

Does it finally begin to make sense? Then use Practice Cards 10 and 11 to test your understanding.

HOW TO BE AT EASE WITH THAN AND AS

Which is correct:

1. You're smarter than *I* OR than *me*?
2. I'm as good as *he* OR as *him*?

Check your immediate reactions before proceeding.

Answer:

This is a tricky problem, but one that can be solved within a few seconds if you realize that in comparisons *than* and *as* are regularly followed either by an *actual* or an *understood* verb.

Notice the italicized verb after *than* or *as* in the following sentences. 1. He is as good *as* she *is*. 2. He's better *than* I *am*. 3. They get ahead faster *than* I *do*.

The confusion arises when the second verb is not expressed but has to be *understood*, as in the two sentences that head this project.

The way to avoid confusion is to put back the *understood verb*. For example: You're smarter than *I* (am); I'm as good as *he* (is).

Obviously, only the *nominative* pronouns will fit here once we fill in the missing verbs, and usually a nominative pronoun *does* follow *than* and *as*.

But not always. Consider this problem:

I love her more than (he? him?)

Does this mean, I love her more than *he* (loves her)?

Or does it mean, I love her more than (I love) *him?* Depending on the meaning, you will mentally fill in either *loves her* or *I love, and the correct pronoun will be determined accordingly.*

To solve problems involving *than* and *as,* the technique is simplicity itself: *You fill in, mentally, the missing verb.* And the proper pronoun immediately falls into place.

For example:

He's taller than *I* (am); we're as good as *they* (are); I love you more than *she* (does); she loves you more than (she loves) *me;* you can eat faster than *we* (can).

GET DOWN TO WORK

Is all this clear? Then turn to Practice Card 12. Work carefully, bearing in mind that repeated drill, preferably aloud, will help you become completely accustomed to using the correct pronoun after *than* and *as.*

Do you love her more than he — or him?

HOW TO GET ALONG WITH EITHER AND NEITHER

Which is correct:

1. Neither of your suggestions *is* OR *are* workable?
2. *Has* OR *have* either of your parents returned yet?
3. Either the president or the vice-president *conducts* OR *conduct* every meeting?

Check off your immediate reactions before proceeding.

Answer:

These questions introduce us to a common problem in correct usage: when to make a verb *singular* (*is, has, conducts, works, goes,* etc.), and when to make it *plural* (*are, have, conduct, work, go,* etc.).

As you undoubtedly know, a singular verb follows a singular subject, a plural verb follows a plural subject.

This, certainly, is obvious enough.

But (this is where the problem usually becomes confusing) it is not always so obvious which word *is* the subject, or whether it is singular or plural!

Consider our three questions in order:

When we say "neither of your suggestions," we mean, strictly, "neither *one* of your two suggestions." The subject is not *suggestions*. It is not *neither*. Grammatically, the subject in question 1 is the understood word *one*. And since *one* is, of course, singular, we want a singular verb—namely, *is*.

Similarly, in question 2, when we say "either of your parents," we mean "either *one* of your two parents," and again the correct verb is singular (*has returned*), agreeing with the understood subject, *one*.

In question 3, when we say "either the president or the vice-president" we mean "either *one* or the other." Again, therefore, a singular verb (*conducts*) is required.

We are ready, then, for two important rules about singular and plural verbs.

1. *Either of* . . . and *neither of* . . . (please note the *of*) mean *either ONE of two* and *neither ONE of two*. They therefore take *singular* verbs.

For example, *either of* these books *is* satisfactory; *neither of* his sisters *works* here; if *either of* you *has finished; neither of* these *is* useful; etc.

2. With *either* . . . *or* and *neither* . . . *nor*, when both elements are *singular* (i.e., one *or* the other), use a *singular* verb. For example, *either* my typist *or* my secretary *is* sure to be in by 9 o'clock; *neither* the dining-room light *nor* the living-room light *is* working; *either* a pen *or* a pencil *is* required for the examination; etc.

You may some day find yourself wrestling with a sentence in which each of the elements connected by *either* . . . *or* or *neither* . . . *nor* takes a different verb.

For instance:

Neither *he* nor *you* (is? are?) acceptable to the nominating committee.

If such a predicament ever does occur, make your verb agree with the subject that is *closer to the verb*. Note the

following in order to understand how this principle works:

Neither he nor *you are* . . .
Neither you nor *he is* . . .
Neither he nor *I am* . . .
Neither I nor *they are* . . .
Neither the boy nor his *parents are* . . .
Neither the spectators nor the *judge is* . . .

GET DOWN TO WORK

Now you are prepared to turn to Card 13 and apply all you have learned about *either* and *neither.*

As in the past, practice repeatedly and at spaced intervals, so that correct usages will become natural and automatic, and all hesitation will vanish.

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT VERB

Which is correct:

1. *Is* OR *are* the president *and* the vice-president still in conference?

2. *Is* OR *are* the president *or* the vice-president still in conference?

3. The cost of raw materials *is* OR *are* still rising?

Check off your immediate reactions before proceeding.

Answer:

Note that in question 1 we are inquiring whether both the president *and* the vice-president—two people—*are* still in conference. In question 2, however, we are asking whether one *or* the other *is* still in conference.

This alerts us to the rule that if *singular* subjects are connected by *and,* the verb is *plural.* But if *singular* subjects are connected by *or,* the verb is *singular.*

For example:

His wife *and* daughter *are* coming; here *are* his wife *and* daughter now; there *were* a dog *and* a cat in the house; his hat *and* coat *are* in the closet; etc.

But:

A pen *or* pencil *is* required for the examination; where *is* a pen *or* pencil? his wife *or* daughter *is* sure to attend the meeting; a cat *or* dog *is* good to have around the house; etc.

How about question 3? Well, what is rising—the *cost* or the *materials*? Clearly, the *cost*, a singular subject. Hence our verb is singular: *is*.

And this alerts us to our second rule: The subject of a verb comes *before, not after*, a preposition (in the example above, *of*). Therefore, whenever a *singular* subject is followed by a prepositional phrase containing a *plural* word, the verb still agrees with the subject, and is *singular*. The prepositions you want to watch out for in this connection are:

of together with as well as along with like unlike

Consider the following example, in which the subject (in italics) is *singular*, the word *after* the preposition is plural, and the verb (in heavy print) is singular.

One of the boys **is** . . .

Each of your answers **is** . . .

The *number* of absentees **is** . . .

A *vase* of tall flowers **is** . . .

The *price* of houses **is** . . .

The *king* together with his followers **is** . . .

John as well as his parents **is** . . .

Mr. Brown along with his wife and children **is** . . .

Mary, like her sisters, **is** . . .

Margie, unlike her parents, **is** . . .

Have you got this point under control? If so, you'll be able to incorporate into your thinking one important exception. If your singular subject is *a lot, a number, a majority, half, more than half*, or some other quantity word with a strongly plural sense, then, as a matter of logic as well as grammar, the verb is *plural*.

For instance:

A number of my friends *were* late; *a lot* of people *are* unhappy; *a majority* of voters *are* thoughtless; *half* of my relatives *are* rich; *more than half* of my friends *are* women; etc.

GET DOWN TO WORK

Let me review briefly, in telegraphic style, the points you have to keep in mind before you start your practice.

Singular subjects connected by *and: plural* verb.

Singular subjects connected by *or: singular* verb.

Subject *never* found *after* the preposition.

Verb agrees with the word *before* the preposition.

Quantity words, if plural in sense, though singular in form, take a *plural* verb.

All right, that wraps it up. Now see how successfully you can apply your learning to Practice Cards 14 to 16.

HOW TO WORK WITH DOUBLE PRONOUNS

Which is correct:

1. You and *me* OR you and *I* will do it?
2. John wants you and *me* OR you and *I* to come to see him?
3. I'll invite you and *they* OR you and *them* to the party?
4. The letter was addressed to you and *she* OR you and *her*?
5. It's you and *he* OR you and *him* I want to see?

Check off your immediate reactions before proceeding.

Answer:

As you have probably begun to suspect, the complicating factor in all five questions is the word *you*. If we shorten these sentences, using only a single pronoun, notice how quickly and naturally the problem resolves itself.

1. (Me, I?) will do it.
2. John wants (me, I?) to come . . .
3. I'll invite (they, them?) . . .
4. The letter was addressed to (she, her?).
5. It's (he, him?) I want to see. (Keep in mind that *it's* stands for *it is*, and recall that *is*, as part of the verb *to be*, is followed by the nominative case.)

This time, I am sure, you felt no doubt about choosing the correct pronouns—*I, me, them, her, he,* in that order. Obviously, the alternate forms in the first four sentences would sound absolutely absurd.

And this provides us with the key to solving any problem in which a pronoun is used in conjunction either with another pronoun or with a noun.

That key is: test the sentence using only the questionable pronoun (i.e., temporarily ignore the other pronoun or the noun), and the correct answer will fall into place without further analysis.

Let's see how this works. In each of the following, cross out the italicized words, read aloud what is left of the sentence, and notice how easy it is to choose the correct pronoun.

1. *John and* (she? her?) will certainly be here on time.

2. I expect (she? her?) *and her husband* to help with the serving.

3. Can't you make a party without *my wife and* (I? me?)

4. Are you going to send (he? him?) *and his wife* an invitation?

5. They are accusing *you and* (we? us?) of deceiving them.

6. It's (she? her?) *and the children* I'm thinking about.

Key

1- she, 2- her, 3- me, 4- him, 5- us, 6- she (after a form of the verb *to be*).

Now let us make the problem just a bit harder. Suppose we are dealing with two pronouns *both* of which are questionable, as in:

The manager wants *he* and *I*—or *him* and *me*—to open the store tomorrow.

Then what do we do? Practically the same thing. We test the sentence with *only one of the pronouns at a time.* We say, first:

The manager wants (he? him?) to open the store . . .

Then:

The manager wants (I? me?) to open . . .

As before, the correct answers (*him, me*) are inescapable—the proper choice is *him and me.*

Try these on your own:

1. (Him and her? She and he?) will be glad to help you.
2. He wants (they and we? them and us?) to be friends.
3. I'd rather work with (he and she? him and her?) any day.
4. Do you think (we and they? us and them?) are friends?

Key

1- she and he, 2- them and us, 3- him and her, 4-we and they.

GET DOWN TO WORK

All set on this simple and foolproof method for finding the correct pronoun? Then turn at once to Practice Card 17, and see how successfully you can apply what you have learned.

HOW TO CONQUER WHO AND WHOM

Which is strictly correct:

1. *Who* OR *whom* do you see?
2. *Who* OR *whom* are you talking to?
3. *Who* OR *whom* would you like to be if you weren't yourself?
4. *Who* OR *whom* do you think it is?
5. This is the man *who* OR *whom* I think committed the robbery.

Check off your immediate reactions before proceeding.

Answer:

The distinctions between *who* and *whom* are surprisingly easy to learn if you realize that *who* is a relative pronoun that takes the place of *he* (or *she*) and *whom* is a relative pronoun that takes the place of *him* (or *her*).

To figure out the correct form, when doubt arises, turn the sentence around and substitute either *he* or *him* for the pronoun in question.

If *he* (or *she*) would be correct, use *who*.

If *him* (or *her*) would be correct, use *whom*.

Of course, in cases in which a plural word is involved, substitute *they* or *them*. *He*, *she*, and *they*, all nominative pronouns, stand for *who*. *Him*, *her*, and *them*, all objective pronouns, stand for *whom*.

Let's try some examples.

1. (Who, Whom) do you see? You see *him.* Hence, *whom.*

2. (Who, Whom) are you talking to? You are talking to *him.* Hence, *whom.*

3. (Who, Whom) would you like to be? You would like to be *he* (*to be* takes the nominative pronoun). Hence, *who.*

4. (Who, Whom) do you think it is? You think it is *he* (a form of *to be* takes the nominative pronoun). Hence, *who.*

5. This is the man (who, whom) I think committed the robbery. I think *he* committed the robbery. Hence, *who.*

6. Pick out some people (who, whom) you know to be happy. You know *them* to be happy. Hence, *whom.*

And that's all you have to know.

Except for this important point: In everyday informal usage, you may (and most people do) use *who* when it opens a question and immediately precedes a verb. *Who* would be acceptable in examples 1 and 2 above.

But for formal speech, and in careful writing, the distinctions between *who* and *whom* are usually observed.

GET DOWN TO WORK

You should be ready now for some serious drill. If you will practice faithfully and repeatedly on Cards 18 to 20, you will become so expert at using the correct pronoun that one of the biggest bugaboos of English grammar will never again cause you a moment's doubt or hesitation.

TIME FOR REVIEW

You have just completed a miniature grammar course that has highlighted those specific areas where you were once likely to go wrong—where, in fact, most adults make frequent errors. You have become a near-expert on the kind of practical problems that usually baffle and frustrate even well-educated people.

But knowledge of this sort is useful only if you can apply it. Only if you begin to form habits of unerringly and unhesitatingly using the correct word whenever you speak or write can you feel that your understanding has been complete enough, deep enough, and valuable enough to make your time well spent.

For such habits to become an ingrained part of your language patterns, more—much more—drill will be necessary. And so I ask you, after you have finished reading these paragraphs, to turn to Practice Cards 21 to 24, which contain suggestions for a thorough and methodical review plus a series of tests covering everything you have studied in this booklet. Do these tests carefully. Review a number of times, at spaced intervals, until you are absolutely sure of what you are doing.

With such repeated practice, and with continued drill on the first twenty cards, you will gradually make forgetting impossible. And you will accomplish a good deal more than that. You will also eliminate once and for all every last shred of doubt or confusion from your mind when the sentences in which you present your ideas contain any of the tricky problems discussed in these pages.

You will never again worry that you may be making unconscious errors when you express your thinking. You will know for a certainty that you are using correct English!

And the means to this goal are the twenty-four Practice Cards. Carry them around with you, unfailingly, for the next month. Shuffle and reshuffle them, constantly changing their order, and during otherwise idle moments (riding to and from work, waiting for elevators, having lunch alone, etc.), keep on working with them so that correct reactions become more and more habitual.

These cards are your key to complete and final mastery of the subject . . . a subject of critical importance in achieving the fluency—and respect—needed for business success.

FOLLOW-UP WORK

You have now trained yourself to avoid the most commonly made mistakes in English. But it is quite likely that you have particular little habits of your own that need correcting—habits too specialized to include in the "common" mistakes.

Here is how to work on these habits:

1. ***Listen.*** Get into the habit of noticing how people say things. If a man or woman you know to be well educated uses a construction different from one you would use, find out which is correct. Note down the correct way of saying this thing on one of the following pages and review it now and then.

2. ***Read.*** As you read, notice how words and phrases are used. Be alert to the language used in newspapers, magazines, and books. Again, if you find a construction or usage that seems odd to you, find out if it is right. Note down the right way on one of the following pages and get into the habit of saying and writing it the *right* way.

3. ***Ask.*** Don't hesitate to ask *why* a person says a thing a certain way. He will be flattered and pleased to help out.

Use these last three pages for your notes on your own special English problems.

WRONG WAY	RIGHT WAY *(Practice saying and writing it this way)*

WRONG WAY	RIGHT WAY *(Practice saying and writing it this way)*

WRONG WAY	RIGHT WAY *(Practice saying and writing it this way)*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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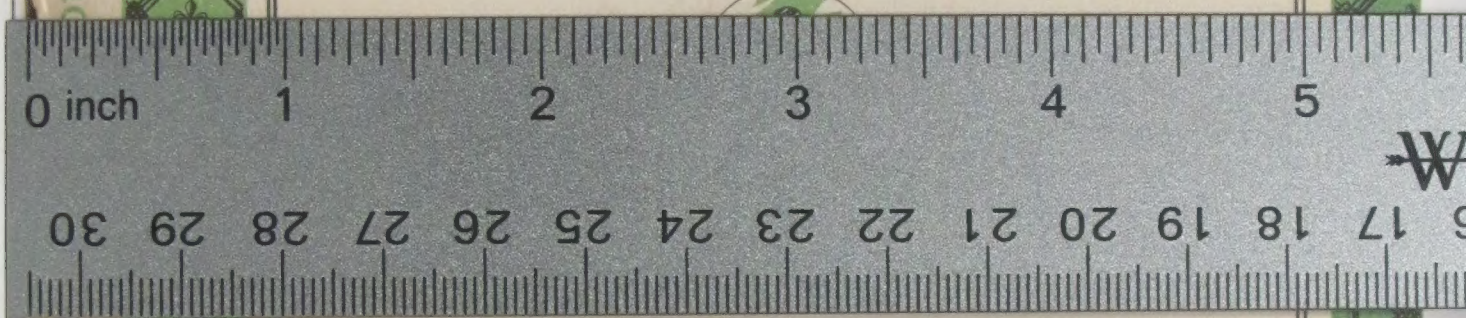

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